

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, said first end having a first cavity adapted to receive a support member extending from said drive mechanism, and a second cavity adapted to receive a second support member extending from said drive mechanism.

2. (Original) The surgical retractor blade of claim 1 wherein said channel is adapted to receive and incised sternum.

3. (Original) The surgical retractor blade of claim 1 wherein said first cavity is a blind hole having a predetermined depth from said first end.

4. (Original) The surgical retractor blade of claim 3 wherein said blind hole is substantially cylindrical.

5. (Original) The surgical retractor blade of claim 3 wherein said depth is at least about 1.125 inches long.

6. (Original) The surgical retractor blade of claim 1 wherein said first cavity becomes progressively smaller in a direction away from said first end.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A surgical retractor blade, said retractor blade comprising an engineering polymer body having a first end adapted to attach to a separate, complete driving mechanism, said first end having a first cavity extending substantially along a direction of a longitudinal axis of said blade and adapted to receive a support member extending from said drive mechanism, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, and a rail extending along at least a portion of said polymeric body.

not approved for 1/3/05